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Throughout history, there has been an evident evolution of the “perfect” body type for women. One can begin talking about how during the Paleolithic era, for women to have a plus size curvy body was a representation of fertility. For example, the statue of the Venus of Willendorf — “a statue crafted somewhere between 24,000-22,000 BCE represented a paradigm of fertility” (Petty, 2021). During this period, for women to have curvy hips, and large breasts was something that defined them as being healthy enough to bear many children. During the Elizabethan and Victorian era, wearing huge amounts of makeup were defined. Women also wore tight corsets that gave an exaggerated hourglass shape to their waist and uplifted their breast. However, at the end of these periods, a less restrictive Aesthetic style began to emerge (V&A Museum, 2012). In the 1920s, clothing was more loose and gave a sense of independence for women that had been in the workforce during WWI. 1920s flappers wore loose-fitting dresses that did not give shape to their bodies, and that were free and comfortable.

As time went by, in the fashion industry one was able to identify the lack of body inclusivity when it came to fashion shows, magazines, ready-to-wear and haute couture fashion. High fashion brands have had the tendency to avoid the inclusion of different body types in their collections for many years, which has created a false idea of how real bodies look like. One can take a look back at how “the fat acceptance movement changed into a body positivity movement in the 1990s, prompting fashion designers to reconsider their attitudes toward consumers' bodies

decades later” (Grant, 2020). The inclusion of different body types in the industry is important because nowadays people need to see body representation. People not being able to see models that look like them on the runways, magazines, and/or billboards, “makes it hard for them to express themselves to their fullest potential” (Lay, 2021). Nowadays we can see many designers such as Christian Siriano and Rihanna understand the importance of body diversity in the industry, and they are a few of the designers creating change. Plus size fashion and models have also become popular these days as they are creating the path for body representation, positivity and diversity in the industry.

The Metropolitan Museum of Art’s exhibition “*In America: A lexicon of Fashion*” shows the modern language of American apparel which is centered on expressive traits rather than practical ones. For example, the patchwork quilt presented at the beginning of the exhibition is used as a metaphor for the country's many aesthetic and cultural identities (Met Museum, n.d.). The exhibition has approximately 100 garments from both men and women being showcased in the exhibition. The exhibition represents “a revised vocabulary of American fashion based on its expressive qualities” (Met Museum, n.d.). Some of the words that are used to represent the garments being displayed in twelve different sections include: nostalgia, confidence, consciousness, reverence, respect, freedom, etc... One can see the work of various American designers being highlighted such as Virgil Abloh, Kerby Jean Raymond of Pyer Moss, Christian Siriano, Tommy Hilfinger, Ralph Lauren, Perry Ellis, Claire McCardell and many more. American design and creativity gets highlighted in the exhibition beginning from the 1940s to present time. Every garment represents a time period in American fashion where individual designers brought changes and/or updates to the way people dress.



Figure 1: Savage x Fenty by Robyn Rihanna Fenty at the MET museum

(Met Museum, n.d)

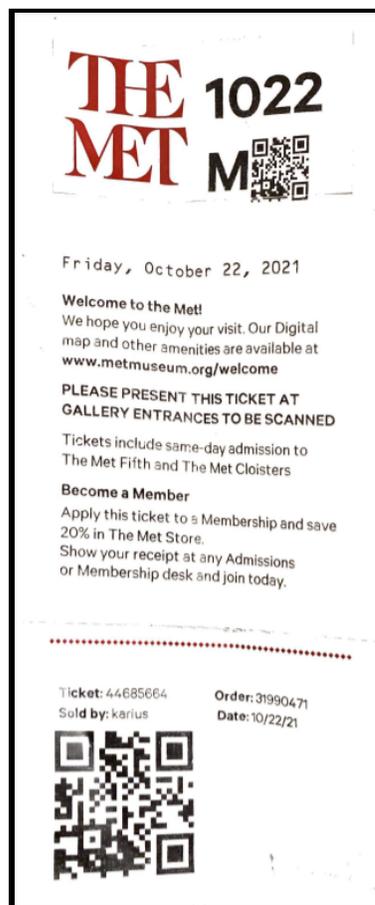
Savage x Fenty's "Recognition" by Robyn Rihanna Fenty (*Figure 1*) is one garment that is featured in the exhibition. Recently, Rihanna's Savage x Fenty brand has succeeded in creating size inclusivity and body positivity in modern fashion shows, and in the lingerie industry itself. In fact, Rihanna "is the first pop diva whose design work has been displayed at the Metropolitan Museum of Art" (Krentcil, 2021). The garment titled "Recognition" aims to represent the body identity and diversity of women in today's society. This lingerie line from Savage x Fenty promotes principles of community and inclusivity with the purpose of avoiding the elitism of high fashion (Met Museum, 2021). The design of the body suit resembles self-expression. A deep self-expression that allows women to showcase their real bodies in a way that they can feel sensual and free. The 2019 Savage x Fenty show from Rihanna celebrated the diversity in women's bodies in the best way possible which included "different races, ethnicities, sizes,

disabled, and trans women” (Ravi et al., 2020). This particular garment, its designer, and its history sort of represents what the new industry looks like with more diverse and real bodies. One can also argue that a better representation of the designer’s principles should be taken into consideration when choosing the mannequin and the design. Perhaps, a plus size mannequin would have gone better with the designer’s aesthetics and principles since Savage x Fenty is a brand that embraces all body types. A plus size mannequin would have stood out a lot in the exhibit and instead of just having all regular sized mannequin. However, the exhibition was great and the garments displayed represented American fashion and the creativity behind it’s designers.

Every designer must be aware of the fundamental elements, and design concepts in order to create aesthetically appealing and distinctive clothing. (FIT Museum, 2021).The elements of design from this garment include color, line, shape, texture and form. The hue of the garment is neutral warm black, which contributes to the sensual mood and attitude of the garment. The value of the color is a dark black color and the intensity of it is rather dull. The lines of this garment seem to be curved as it helps adjust the garment to the shape of the body and represent fluidity. The silhouette of the bodysuit emphasizes and highlights the shape of the body. The shape or silhouette seems to be a bit flat and organic as it is not representing an hourglass shape. The garment features a black synthetic decorative lace that is very see-through, and makes the majority of the garment. The appearance of the fabric texture for the lingerie bodysuit garment is both sheer and somewhat thick because of the decorative lace. The fabric textures also seem to be lightweight and fresh. In the breast area and panties one can see the decorative lace pattern more detailed. The lace also features a repetition of a circled pattern in the same area. A black synthetic net as stoking is wrapped on the waistline with a front oval-shape which seems to

stretch. The garment has a symmetrical balance which creates the impression of both garments having the left and right side equal. The overall emphasis of this design seems to be the decorative lace placed in the breast and panty area . The rhythm of the decorative lace draws the eye of the viewer from one side to the other, and makes it focus specifically on the decoration of the lace. The color schemes of the entire exhibition were neutral, and composed of black and white color which created a dramatic environment. (Selleck, 1974) The lights were fully reflected on the garment to emphasize the overall design.

PROOF OF ATTENDANCE



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